

Amendment to the Specification

*Please amend paragraph [0001] on page 1, lines 5-6, as follows:*

[0001] This application is a continuation in part of U. S. Patent Application-  
~~09/785,842 filed on February 16, 2004~~ No. 6,703,351 B2 issued March 9, 2004.

*Please amend paragraph [0071] on page 23, line 20, as follows:*

[0071] In the foregoing specification, the invention has been described with reference to specific embodiments thereof, and has been demonstrated as effective in providing a water-based drilling fluid that can effectively reduce the rate of drilling fluid pressure invasion of the borehole wall. However, it will be evident that various modifications and changes can be made thereto without departing from the broader spirit or scope of the invention as set forth in the appended claims. Accordingly, the specification is to be regarded in an illustrative rather than a restrictive sense. For example, specific combinations of brines and latexes and with precipitating agents and/or wetting surfactants or salts falling within the claimed parameters, but not specifically identified or tried in a particular composition to reduce mud pressure penetration into shale, sand, and ~~other formations~~ other formations, are anticipated to be within the scope of this invention.